

1 ..Title

2 **City Docking for Dinghies and Other Small Vessels**

3 For the purpose of updating City Code regarding the docking of dinghies and other small vessels
4 at public facilities on the City's waterfront by moving the rules and restrictions for docking
5 dinghies and other small vessels from the chapter on Distressed, Sunken, Damaged, Derelict,
6 Disabled, Neglected or Abandoned Vessels and placing it in the chapter on Operation,
7 Anchoring, and Mooring of Vessels in City Waters; allowing boats with a maximum 17-foot
8 length and a maximum 90 horsepower motor to dock at street ends, dinghy docks, and other
9 designated public mooring; updating Title 15 definitions to conform to the new sections; and
10 generally related to mooring of vessels in City waters.

11 ..Body

12

13

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City Council of the
City of Annapolis

15

Ordinance 7-25

16

Introduced by: Mayor Buckley

17

Co-sponsored by:

18

19 **Referred to:** Environmental Matters Committee and Port Wardens

20 **AN ORDINANCE** concerning

21

City Docking for Dinghies and Other Small Vessels

22

23 **FOR** the purpose of updating City Code regarding the docking of dinghies and other small
24 vessels at public facilities on the City's waterfront by moving the rules and restrictions for
25 docking dinghies and other small vessels from the chapter on Distressed, Sunken,
26 Damaged, Derelict, Disabled, Neglected or Abandoned Vessels and placing it in the
27 chapter on Operation, Anchoring, and Mooring of Vessels in City Waters; allowing boats
28 with a maximum 17-foot length and a maximum 90 horsepower motor to dock at street
29 ends, dinghy docks, and other designated public mooring; updating Title 15 definitions to
30 conform to the new sections; and generally related to mooring of vessels in City waters.

31

32 **BY** repealing and reenacting with amendments the following portions of the Code of the City
33 of Annapolis, 2025 Edition:

34 15.02.030

35 15.10.020

36 15.12.030

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1
2 **BY** enacting with amendments the following portions of the Code of the City of Annapolis,
3 2025 Edition:
4 15.10.035

5
6 **BY** striking the following portions of the Code of the City of Annapolis, 2025 Edition:
7 15.12.020

8
9 **SECTION I: BE IT ESTABLISHED AND ORDAINED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY**
10 **COUNCIL** that the Code of the City of Annapolis shall be amended to read as follows:

11
12 **City Code Title 15 - HARBORS AND WATERFRONT AREAS**

13 **Division I -Generally**

14 **Chapter 15.02 - General Provisions**

15
16 **Section 15.02.030 - Definitions.**

17 For purposes of this title, the following words and phrases have the meanings indicated:

18 **A1.** "Anchoring" means to temporarily secure a vessel to the bottom of water by dropping
19 an anchor or anchors.

20 **B2.** "Berth" means a place where a vessel may be secured to a fixed or floating structure
21 and left unattended.

22 **C3.** "Berthing area" means the water area in which vessels are berthed.

23 **D4.** "Bulkhead" means a structure or partition to retain or prevent sliding of the land into
24 the water. A secondary purpose is to protect the upland from wave action.

25 **E5.** "City dock" means that portion of the City's waterfront property which extends from
26 Prince George Street to the east side of Newman Street, and includes the Dock Street
27 Parking lot, Susan Campbell Park, the lot between 110 Compromise Street and
28 Newman Street, the foot of Newman Street, and all bulkheads, lots, walkways, and
29 piers within those boundaries except the 110 Compromise Street Dock, and the docks
30 surrounding 69 Prince George Street.

31 **F6.** "City facilities" means property, real or personal, owned and operated by the City that
32 is available for use by the public.

33 **G7.** "City waters" means any water within the municipal limits of the City of Annapolis.

34 **H8.** "Community piers and moorings" means any type of structure, fixed or floating, and
35 extending from or in close proximity to community, condominium-owned, or leased
36 property, generally referred to as a pier, dock or wharf, including pilings, buoys,
37 moorings and other similar facilities, and used for the berthing of vessels registered to
38 residents of the community within which the property is located or is in proximity to or

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- 1 to residents or co-owners of the condominium-owned property from which the facility
2 extends or is in proximity to. A community pier also may be used for the berthing of
3 vessels owned by and registered to visitors of residents of the community or
4 condominium, during the period of a visit.
- 5 ~~I~~9. "Developable waterway area" means the waterway area lying between the shoreline,
6 the harbor line and the lateral lines of waterfront property.
- 7 ~~J~~10. "Developable waterfront land" means any waterfront property from which access to a
8 waterway area can be achieved.
- 9 ~~K~~11. "Dry storage" means the keeping of vessels on the land, excluding vessels owned by
10 and registered to the property owner upon which the vessel sits, and excluding vessels
11 awaiting repairs for a period of up to seven days, and further excluding vessels
12 ~~displayed as part of a vessel sales operation.~~
- 13 ~~L~~12. "Finger pier" means a small, narrow extension of a pier; usually provided to facilitate
14 access to berthed vessels.
- 15 ~~M~~13. "Fixed harbor line" means the line defining the maximum channelward limits of
16 marine construction, defined by and encompassing that construction lawfully installed
17 in a given developable waterway area and identified by solid unbroken lineation on the
18 harbor line maps.
- 19 ~~N~~14. "Gabion" means a connected system of wicker or metal cages filled with brush or rock
20 and used as bulkhead for slope protection or stabilization.
- 21 ~~O~~15. "Harbor line" means a line, either fixed or provisional, defining the maximum
22 channelward limits of marine construction for a given developable waterway area.
- 23 ~~P~~16. "Harbor line map" means a map of the City, scale 1:200, graphically showing zoning
24 districts, shorelines of the waterways, channel markers and harbor lines.
- 25 ~~Q~~17. "Harbormaster" means the officer of the City appointed pursuant to City Code, Section
26 2.12.060 and who performs the duties set forth in that section.
- 27 ~~R~~18. "Housebarge" means any vessel, boat, craft or structure originally designed to float or
28 supported by means of flotation which is used or designed to be used primarily for
29 occupancy as a residential, business or social club structure and which is not designed
30 or intended primarily for self-propelled navigation.
- 31 ~~S~~19. "Lateral lines" means lines extending from the shoreline to the harbor line separating
32 adjacent developable waterway areas.
- 33 ~~T~~20. "Marina" means any arrangement of piers, slips, mooring piles, wharves, or buoys
34 emplaced in the water and on abutting land and which is intended to be used for the
35 berthing, storing, mooring, securing, servicing, repairing, selling or trading, or renting
36 of vessels and is not a private or community pier and mooring.
- 37 ~~U~~21. "Mooring" includes, but is not limited to:

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- 1 ~~1~~a. A place where vessels are secured, other than a pier;
- 2 ~~2~~b. A chain, line or other device by which a vessel is secured in place and which is not
- 3 carried aboard the vessel as regular equipment when underway; or
- 4 ~~3~~c. The process of securing a vessel by means of chains, lines or other devices described
- 5 ~~in subsection (2) above.~~
- 6 ~~V~~22. "Mooring buoy" means an anchored buoy fitted to receive a vessel's mooring chain or
- 7 hawser.
- 8 ~~W~~23. "Municipal infraction" means any violation of this code which has been
- 9 specifically declared to be a municipal infraction. See Chapter 1.20.
- 10 ~~X~~24. "Operate" means to navigate or otherwise use a vessel. A vessel is in use whenever it is
- 11 in the water and is not docked or moored.
- 12 ~~Y~~25. "Operator" means the person who operates or has charge of the navigation or use of a
- 13 vessel.
- 14 ~~Z~~26. "Owner" means a person, other than a lienholder, having property in or title to a vessel.
- 15 Owner includes a person entitled to use or possess a vessel subject to an interest in
- 16 another person reserved or created by agreement and securing payment of performance
- 17 of an obligation. Owner does not include a lessee under a lease not intended as
- 18 security.
- 19 ~~AA~~27. "Pier" means a structure attached to fast land and used, or capable of being used, for
- 20 tying up, mooring, embarking and disembarking from, fueling or loading and
- 21 unloading vessels.
- 22 ~~BB~~28. "Private piers and moorings" means any type of structure, fixed or floating, generally
- 23 referred to as a pier, dock or wharf, including pilings, buoys, and other similar
- 24 facilities, used primarily for the berthing of vessels owned by and registered to the
- 25 owner or tenant of the property from which the facility extends or is in proximity to.
- 26 ~~CC~~29. "Provisional harbor line" means the line defining the maximum channelward limits of
- 27 marine construction in a given developable waterway area which has not been
- 28 developed fully, and as defined in Sections 15.18.030 and 15.18.040 and identified by
- 29 dashed broken lineation on the harbor line maps.
- 30 ~~DD~~30. "Riprap" means a layer, facing or protective mound of stones randomly placed to
- 31 prevent erosion, scour or sloughing of a structure or embankment.
- 32 ~~EE~~31. "Shoreline" means the mean high water line or the waterward line of an existing
- 33 bulkhead, riprap or gabion as shown on the harbor line maps.
- 34 ~~FF~~32. "Slip" means any arrangement of a pier, designed and intended to be used for the wet
- 35 storage of a single vessel.
- 36 33. "Street end park" means City-owned property at the water-end of a City street or road.
- 37 ~~GG~~34. "Vessel" means every description of watercraft, including an ice boat, but not including
- 38 a sea plane, that is used, or capable of being used, as a means of transportation on

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1 water or ice. Vessel includes the motor, spars, sails and accessories of a vessel. For
2 purposes of this title, "vessel" shall include barges.

3 ~~HH~~35. "Waterway" means any water area providing access from one place to another,
4 primarily a water area providing a regular route for water traffic.

5 ~~H~~36. "Wet storage" means the docking, mooring, berthing or otherwise securing of vessels
6 to any sort of pier, wharf, dock, piling, buoy or other similar facility, other than
7 temporary berthing and includes a covered slip within a structure.

8 ~~J~~37. "Working boatyard" means an arrangement of piers, slips, mooring piles, wharves, or
9 buoys used for the repair, construction and temporary storage of vessels, and which are
10 not occupied or rented by the general public.

11 ~~KK~~38. "Yacht club" means a bona fide private, nonprofit club, owned and operated by the
12 members, providing limited marina facilities for the use of members and their guests.

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14
15 **City Code Title 15 - HARBORS AND WATERFRONT AREAS**

16 **Division II - City Waters**

17 **Chapter 15.10 - Operation, Anchoring, and Mooring of Vessels in City Waters**

18
19 **Section 15.10.020 - Fees.**

- 20 A. Fees for the use of City facilities shall be set by annual resolution of the City Council.
21 B. Upon application, historic vessels, vessels sponsored by not-for-profit foundations,
22 government vessels, and vessels acting on behalf of the City may be exempted from fees
23 for visits of up to seven days in accordance with ~~City Code, Section~~ § 6.04.210 and the
24 regulations adopted pursuant thereto.

25
26
27 **Section 15.12.035 - Docking Dinghies and Other Small Boats.**

28 **A. Generally.**

- 29 **1. Applicability.** This section applies to all vessels which could be berthed and to all
30 personal property which could be offloaded at every public dock, street ending,
31 park dock, shore or other shoreside real property within the City.
32 **2. Fee Required.** No person shall launch a vessel at any public dock in the City
33 without first paying any applicable launch fee as specified in the City Fee
34 Schedule.

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1 **3. Permission Required.** A person may not berth, beach or leave any vessels or any
2 personal property at any street ending, park dock or upon any public shore
3 without the permission of the Harbormaster and subject to the limitation of
4 berthing, beaching or storage pursuant to this section.

5 **B. Docking Requirements and Restrictions.**

6 **1. Number of Vessels Allowed.**

7 a. The number of vessels which may be stored at any public street ending,
8 park dock or upon any public shore having a boat launch shall not exceed
9 one vessel for every 10 linear feet of width of the total public frontage
10 available as measured and marked by the Harbormaster, excluding the
11 width of any launch ramps.

12 b. Each public street ending shall be posted to indicate the maximum number
13 of boats which may be stored at that location.

14 **2. Boat Launch Obstruction.**

15 a. At any street ending having a boat launch, no vessel may be berthed,
16 beached or left in any manner which may obstruct access to and use of the
17 boat ramp.

18 b. Any street ending having a boat launch shall be posted to indicate this
19 restriction.

20 **3. Length and Power Limit.** Except for unpowered canoes and kayaks, no vessel of
21 more than ~~twelve~~¹⁷ feet in length or ~~twenty-five~~⁹⁵ horsepower may be berthed,
22 beached or left overnight at any street ending.

23 **4. Docking Lines.** No vessel at a street ending, park dock or public shore may be
24 left secured side to, secured to a dock by both bow and stern lines, berthed by
25 securing one line to the shore or dock and one to an anchor, or berthed and
26 secured by means of illegal pilings or stakes.

27 **5. Permit Required for Overnight Stays.**

28 a. **One Night.** Small vessels berthed, beached or left overnight at street
29 endings, park docks, or on public shores, or on adjacent public property,
30 must first register with the Harbormaster, pay applicable fees and display
31 current stickers provided by the Harbormaster.

32 b. **Two or More Nights.** Except for vessels which are registered with the
33 Harbormaster and which display a current sticker provided by the
34 Harbormaster, no vessel may be berthed, beached or stored at any street
35 ending, park dock, or upon any public shore for more than two
36 consecutive nights, and no vessel may be stored at any street ending for
37 more than 10 nights in total per year.

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1 **6. Docking on Private Property.**

2 **a. No person shall berth, beach or leave a vessel at any private dock or on**
3 **any private shore in the City without permission of the owner of the dock**
4 **or shore.**

5 **b. Upon complaint of the owner of the dock or shore of a violation of this**
6 **provision, the Harbormaster may issue a citation and impound the vessel**
7 **per §15.12.035(D).**

8 **C. Boat Conditions.** Any small vessels found anywhere in City waters or beached on any
9 **City shores shall be kept in good condition, clean, well-secured, bailed, safe for**
10 **occupancy, registered as required, and ready for use.**

11 **D. Violations.**

12 **1. Any violation of this section is a municipal infraction.**

13 **2. Any vessels or property found in violation of this section may be:**

14 **a. Issued a citation;**

15 **b. Removed by the Harbormaster, or an authorized agent, at the expense of the**
16 **owner; and**

17 **c. Held in impound per § 15.04.030 until all violations have been abated and all**
18 **fees paid.**

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21
22 **City Code Title 15 - HARBORS AND WATERFRONT AREAS**

23 **Division II - City Waters**

24 **Chapter 15.12 - Distressed, Sunken, Damaged, Derelict, Disabled, Neglected or Abandoned**
25 **Vessels or Property**

26 ~~**Section 15.12.020 - Leaving property or vessels on public docks, street endings or shores**~~
27 ~~**and on private docks or shores without permission of the owner.**~~

28 ~~A. This section shall apply to all vessels which could be berthed and to all personal property~~
29 ~~which could be offloaded at every public dock, street ending, park dock, shore or other~~
30 ~~shoreside real property within the City.~~

31 ~~B. A person may not berth, beach or leave any vessels or any personal property at any street~~
32 ~~ending, park dock or upon any public shore without the permission of the Harbormaster~~
33 ~~and subject to the limitation of berthing, beaching or storage provided in subsections C~~
34 ~~and D of this section.~~

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- 1 C. ~~The number of vessels which may be stored at any public street ending, park dock or~~
2 ~~upon any public shore having a boat launch shall not exceed one vessel for every ten~~
3 ~~linear feet of width of the total public frontage available as measured and marked by the~~
4 ~~Harbormaster, excluding the width of any launch ramps. Each public street ending shall~~
5 ~~be posted to indicate the maximum number of boats which may be stored at that location.~~
- 6 D. ~~At any street ending having a boat launch, no vessel may be berthed, beached or left in~~
7 ~~any manner which may obstruct access to and use of the boat ramp. Any street ending~~
8 ~~having a boat launch shall be posted to indicate this restriction.~~
- 9 E. ~~Except for vessels which are registered with the Harbormaster and which display a~~
10 ~~current sticker provided by the Harbormaster, no vessel may be berthed, beached or~~
11 ~~stored at any street ending, park dock, or upon any public shore for more than two~~
12 ~~consecutive nights, and no vessel may be stored at any street ending for more than ten~~
13 ~~nights in total per year.~~
- 14 F. ~~Except for unpowered canoes and kayaks conforming to the provisions of Subsection E~~
15 ~~of this section, no vessel of more than twelve feet in length or twenty five horsepower~~
16 ~~may be berthed, beached or left overnight at any street ending.~~
- 17 G. ~~No vessel at a street ending, park dock or public shore may be left secured side to,~~
18 ~~secured to a dock by both bow and stern lines, berthed by securing one line to the shore~~
19 ~~or dock and one to an anchor, or berthed and secured by means of illegal pilings or~~
20 ~~stakes.~~
- 21 H. ~~Small vessels berthed, beached or left overnight at street endings, park docks, or on~~
22 ~~public shores, or on adjacent public property, must first register with the Harbormaster,~~
23 ~~pay applicable fees and display current stickers provided by the Harbormaster.~~
- 24 I. ~~Any small vessels found anywhere in City waters or beached on any City shores shall be~~
25 ~~kept in good condition, clean, well secured, bailed, safe for occupancy, registered as~~
26 ~~required, and ready for use.~~
- 27 J. ~~No person shall berth, beach or leave a vessel at any private dock or on any private shore~~
28 ~~in the City without permission of the owner of the dock or shore. Upon complaint of the~~
29 ~~owner of the dock or shore of a violation of this provision, the Harbormaster may issue a~~
30 ~~citation and take other measures as provided in Subsection K of this section.~~
- 31 K. ~~No person shall launch a vessel at any public dock in the City without first paying any~~
32 ~~applicable launch fee as specified in the City Fee Schedule. Upon a violation of this~~
33 ~~provision, the Harbormaster, or an authorized agent, may issue a citation and take other~~
34 ~~measures as provided in paragraph L of this section.~~
- 35 L. ~~Any violation of this section is a municipal infraction. In addition, any vessels or property~~
36 ~~found in violation of this section may be removed by the Harbormaster, or an authorized~~
37 ~~agent, at the expense of the owner, and held in impound per Section 15.04.030 until all~~
38 ~~violations have been abated and all fees paid.~~
- 39

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1 **SECTION II: AND BE IT FURTHER ESTABLISHED AND ORDAINED BY**
2 **THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that this ordinance shall take effect upon
3 passage.

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